

**White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation
Day 2 Breakout Session Compilation**

Topic: Accelerating Cooperative Conservation as a way of Doing Business: Building Capacity, Skills, and Practices Across Organizations

Session number: 44

Afternoon

Facilitator: Patrick Field

Location: 120

A. Major Repeated Themes Raised in the Discussion. *A grouping of ideas repeated with some frequency in the session and brought up again during the group summation process. Also includes diverging views and/or questions about the topic.*

- Align regulation, policy, and cooperative conservation
- Funding
- Education and Awareness
- Making It Real in agencies:
 - Capacity building
 - Training
 - Performance measures
- Continuity and Commitment
- Transparency and Inclusiveness
- Communication should happen early and often.
- Measurements for monitoring and evaluation
- National Commitment and local action
- Clearly stated and institutionalized policy that is implemented at all levels
- Reduce institutional impediments

B. National-level Practical Actions *that could be taken by the Federal government, national NGO's, and other national organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Identify a Cooperative Conservation Czar
- “Renewed national commitment” to cooperative conservation
- Funding or incentives
 - Require local matches for federal funding. Local matches may include in-kind services
 - Create mechanisms for multi-year funding
 - Tie funding to agencies as well as public and stakeholders if they are collaborating
 - Find mechanisms to pool multiple sources of funding to support cooperative efforts
 - Budget for cooperative conservation more than compliance and litigation avoidance
- Encourage open, transparent processes.
- Reform or address FACA challenges to the cooperative conservation approach.
- Establish clear ground rules up front.

This document represents the views of the individual participants and does not reflect group consensus.

- Reevaluate Project Performance measurements to incorporate a diverse suite
- Integrating existing resources
 - Cooperative Conservation Hotline
 - Compilation of websites of collaborative approaches that ARE working
- Create cross-agency state Cooperative Conservation committees which would work similarly to NRCS
- Personnel performance measures need to be reevaluated
 - Reward risk taking
 - People should be judged based on diverse metrics (including relationship building, etc.) rather than bureaucratic metrics
 - Strategic plan to reinvigorate and align the personnel system
 - Reform performance based budgeting to align with cooperative conservation
- Visionary targets
- Avoid creation of new bureaucracy
- Decentralize and devolve decision making while maintaining clear overarching vision, goals, and objectives
- Training in stewardship contracting, partnering, conflict resolution. Mentoring and exchange programs across sectors should be encouraged.
- Make case for the cost-benefit of cooperative conservation that is broad-minded and takes into account administrative costs, litigation risks, etc.
- Frame capacity building positively to encourage high level participation.

C. Local-level Practical Actions *that could be taken at the local or community level by Tribes, state and local communities, private citizens, and local organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Finding more and creative ways to leverage funds with private funds
- Share best practices that would help to use the successes and key techniques for other sites
- Integrating funding, priorities, and technical capabilities with cooperative conservation
- Businesses need to engage neighbors and their public
- Engage local universities as partners
- Incorporate indigenous knowledge
- Link rural development to cooperative conservation
 - Rich ecosystems, forested lands, and poor communities often overlap
- Train diverse groups to encourage participation of relevant stakeholders.

D. Particularly insightful quotes from participants that capture the essence of key points made during the group's discussion.

“The federal government should be helping us do it not telling us what to do.”

This document represents the views of the individual participants and does not reflect group consensus.

**White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation
Day 2 Breakout Session Compilation**

Topic: Accelerating Cooperative Conservation as a way of Doing Business: Building Capacity, Skills, and Practices Across Organizations

Session number: 44

Afternoon

Facilitator: Mamie Parker

Location: 121

A. Major Repeated Themes Raised in the Discussion. *A grouping of ideas repeated with some frequency in the session and brought up again during the group summation process. Also includes diverging views and/or questions about the topic.*

- **Leadership - personal involvement, commitment and trust**
- **Targeted outreach and inclusion of range of participation**
- **Incentives**
- **Funding**
- **Trust from all participants**
- **Demand cooperation**
- **Personal involvement by all leadership**

B. National-level Practical Actions *that could be taken by the Federal government, national NGO's, and other national organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Personal involvement by all leadership
- Give time to work out things – no artificial deadlines
- Build incentives for agency personnel and reward people for cooperating
- Rewards for universities. Academia typically rewarded for writing papers; reward instead for actually getting projects done
- Need meaningful measurable results
- Support from top down for bottom up developed projects
- Allow FACA relief (allow feds to collaborate)
- Trust of top leadership
- Commitment of top leadership
- Tie budget increases to proven partnerships
- Continued funding for successful projects
- Provide funding to make change and leverage more resources

C. Local-level Practical Actions *that could be taken at the local or community level by Tribes, state and local communities, private citizens, and local organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

This document represents the views of the individual participants and does not reflect group consensus.

- Provide interagency teams to train local groups in cooperation and how to get assistance
- Establish interagency teams, MOUs, and have horizontal and vertical buy-in and alignment
- Use local connection to involve key stakeholders
- Mutual accountability from stakeholders
- Give locals tools, data, and expertise to do their job; be facilitator instead of telling them how to do their job
- Establish a trusted local leader
- Report to public as work is being done, not just at the end
- Market purpose, progress, and successes
- Value of relationships – there is strength in diversity
- Community defines their own future and how they relate to government and how government relates to them
- Share successes (books, CDs and web)
- Duplicate CC conference at state level

D. Particularly insightful quotes from participants that capture the essence of key points made during the group's discussion.

- In a democracy we need to have informed citizens – we need long term education.
- Reward people for good practices and positive contributions instead of cleaning up messes.
- Federal agencies need to hold themselves accountable from top to bottom to walk the talk
- A lot of people have the desire but not the skill.
- Develop at the bottom but support from top.
- Need user friendly mechanism to educate public on opportunities for one-stop shopping for federal assistance
- Turbo tax of govt programs. Needs simple way of getting basics of programs to the public
- Get trained or get lost.
- Beyond ideology to effectiveness.
- CC give me a belief in democracy again
- TOP LEVEL TIME SHOWS INTEREST

This document represents the views of the individual participants and does not reflect group consensus.

**White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation
Day 2 Breakout Session Compilation**

Topic: Accelerating Cooperative Conservation as a way of Doing Business: Building Capacity, Skills, and Practices Across Organizations

Session number: 44

Facilitator: Gregg Walker

Afternoon

Location: 122

A. Major Repeated Themes Raised in the Discussion. *A grouping of ideas repeated with some frequency in the session and brought up again during the group summation process. Also includes diverging views and/or questions about the topic.*

- People need more training in cooperative conservation skills
- Local input is required for actions that impact the local community
- Procedural Flexibility
- Leadership at the local level
- Respect for the land owner
- Persistence
- There needs to be an impetus for change
- Good science is essential for cooperative conservation
- Learning is a two-way street.

B. National-level Practical Actions *that could be taken by the Federal government, national NGO's, and other national organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Need to identify skill sets for cooperative conservation;
 - Develop job series that reflect those needs (i.e., facilitation skills, conflict resolution specialists)
 - need to hire people with those skill set;
 - train new and existing people in that skill set
- Identify examples and models of successful Cooperative Conservation
 - Develop a support /mentor system for Cooperative Conservation
- Change legal and regulatory framework in agencies to better promote cooperative conservation; i.e.
 - Agencies should develop a cooperative conservation guidebook that presents guidelines for procedural flexibility and resource integrity, thus, reducing litigation risks
- Devolve conservation authority to states
 - Block grants for cooperative conservation
 - Allow innovation and experimentation at the local level

This document represents the views of the individual participants and does not reflect group consensus.

- Provide block grants to states
- The success of Cooperative Conservation efforts needs to be measured in two ways
 1. The on the ground resource results
 2. the quality of the cooperative effort
- The President should sign an executive order on cooperative conservation that sets long-term goals and drives actions of the agencies
- Universities should teach effective communication and collaboration skills
 - Identify and share best practices at the university level
 - Solicit corporate endowments to support student learning in cooperative conservation

C. Local-level Practical Actions *that could be taken at the local or community level by Tribes, state and local communities, private citizens, and local organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Community Stakeholders need to attend training in CC together
- Recognition that some CC efforts are community driven with government as minor players
- Utilize the facilitation and conflict resolution expertise of local not-for-profit organizations
- Agencies need to understand and access the informal network of the local community
 - Develop and utilize tools; i.e., social mapping and community assessment; and identification of opinion leaders
- The success of Cooperative Conservation efforts needs to be measured in two ways
 - The on the ground resource results
 - the quality of the cooperative effort
- Need resources for monitoring and adaptive management

D. Particularly insightful quotes from participants that capture the essence of key points made during the group's discussion.

“We need to get the people skills right.”

“The best way to lead a mule is to let him think it's his idea.”

“It's about attitude.”

“Agencies need to work together and not compete.”

This document represents the views of the individual participants and does not reflect group consensus.

White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation Day 2 Breakout Session Compilation

Topic: Accelerating Cooperative Conservation as a way of Doing Business: Building Capacity, Skills, and Practices Across Organizations

Session number: 44

Afternoon

Facilitator: John Jostes

Location: 123

A. Major Repeated Themes Raised in the Discussion. *A grouping of ideas repeated with some frequency in the session and brought up again during the group summation process. Also includes diverging views and/or questions about the topic.*

Three main Areas:

1. Framing a platform to serve as a starting point for cooperative Conservation

- Values really matter!.
- Land users perspective was very strong. Two main perspectives:
 - o Indigenous
 - o Farming perspective
- There needs to be a reason for people to come together. Ensuring that local land users are involved brings their passion – Because it is personal.
- These efforts are more successful when you have the local leadership that holds it together. The peer pressure or the social structure that brings people to action, e.g. the Australian Model – has a social motivation to it, as opposed to an individual motivation. Consistent with the “You can’t do it by yourself” theme that we heard yesterday.,

2. Recognizing strategic opportunities as you embark on the practice of engaging communities in cooperative conservation.

- There is a need to have some structure, particularly a need to plug into a Pre-existing structure – such as family or community (in essence a “tribal” way)
Need to focus conservation efforts on problems people identify with. Problems that address basic needs of security, health and
- Need to change the approach from the “stovepipe” mentality to a cross-functional approach, so as to leverage a bigger picture perspective.
- Only when we use those to strategically achieve a “critical mass” does it appear worth investing time and resources of concerned communities.
- Need to shift from command and control mentality to an opportunistic or entrepreneurial mind-set at all levels of community and government.

3. How we get there:

- It’s all about relationships and building trust.
- Leveraging existing connections – vertically and horizontal, e.g. networking not only among neighbors, but up and down levels of governance.
- Focus on pragmatic incrementalism rather than seeking perfection at the expense of progress.

This document represents the views of the individual participants and does not reflect group consensus.

- People show up at the table for different reasons – it is crucial to clarify a common objective or desired outcome.
- Change mindsets from avoiding risks to rewarding innovative behavior.
- Build the skills from the ground up – including project planning, project management, evaluation, organization of people and projects. These are not usually the skills possessed by technical people at the federal level, but are new skills that need to be fostered through training.
- Don't underestimate the level of commitment it will take to effect change, some things take a long time, and patience and persistence are needed.
- Since this is a White House initiative, it would instill greater confidence if the President were here.

B. National-level Practical Actions *that could be taken by the Federal government, national NGO's, and other national organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Align more closely at the federal level how conservation projects are evaluated. Once identified at the federal level, make the criteria consistent for state and local levels as well. Conservation happens in a better way when there are consistent criteria for how projects are supported from the local level to the policy level. There needs to be less bureaucratic friction in getting from idea to implementation.
- Align federal performance evaluation systems so that fostering cooperation and trust are rewarded, not only individual efforts.
- Need to provide more coordinated federal assistance on projects. Local groups have to organize the piecemeal assistance they get from Federal agencies with different responsibilities.

C. Local-level Practical Actions *that could be taken at the local or community level by Tribes, state and local communities, private citizens, and local organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Incorporate indigenous knowledge into conservation projects. Much knowledge can be gained from indigenous populations, that we are currently missing.
- Local leaders need to train leaders. Leadership training really pays off, and local communities can leverage resources, including personnel to train others. Developing a local land ethic is key. One of the key ingredients when I look back at our tribe is the boundary system. Any land development would be worth thousands of dollars. We banned development. Our tribe is one of the poorest in the state. If we allowed development along the river, we would be very very wealthy. But it is a system of values. I think that is what is needed in the larger society – is a system of values.
- Need to train people on choices and consequences – decision sciences as a part of conservation planning and management.

D. Particularly insightful quotes:

- I don't want this to be a campaign slogan – I want this to be a real way to make conservation happen.
- I don't want to be a bumper sticker, I want to be part of getting something done.
- Cooperation is not an end in itself, we must ensure that we are clear about what we are cooperating for.

This document represents the views of the individual participants and does not reflect group consensus.